***Animated Faith:***

***Getting Out of Your Comfort Zone***

**May 28, 2023**

**Overarching Theme:** 2023 – Living the Dream

**Instructions:**

When using this material as teacher, feel free to pick and choose the point you want to emphasis in the lesson. The format of the curriculum is designed to have an abundance of information in which to refer as desired.

**Core Point: 2023 can be a year of living the dream of faithful discipleship as we take a next step forward in following Jesus Christ.**

**Reflect on this Scripture:** Acts 2: 1-7; 12-21 NRSV  *When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.****2****And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.****3****Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.****4****All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.* ***5****Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.****6****And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.****7****Amazed and astonished, they asked, ‘Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?****12****All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, ‘What does this mean?’****13****But others sneered and said, ‘They are filled with new wine.’****14****But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Fellow Jews[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3A+1-4%3B+14-21&version=NRSVUE;NIV;MSG#fen-NRSVUE-26953a)*] and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say.****15****Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning.****16****No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:****17****‘In the last days it will be, God declares,  
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,  
    and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,  
and your young men shall see visions,  
    and your old men shall dream dreams.****18****Even upon my slaves, both men and women,  
    in those days I will pour out my Spirit,  
        and they shall prophesy.****19****And I will show portents in the heaven above  
    and signs on the earth below,  
        blood, and fire, and smoky mist.****20****The sun shall be turned to darkness  
    and the moon to blood,  
        before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day.****21****Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’*

**Commentary:**   
An important emphasis of this text is the sudden holy boldness of Peter. When I read this account of Peter, I wonder, who is this man who addresses a crowd of thousands and demands to be heard? Who is this man who does not simply make a speech but preaches a sermon?

At some point between the time of Peter’s denial of Jesus and when he stood up and preached his first public sermon in this text, Peter got a bit of holy boldness. Something got a hold of him. Something made him stand before thousands, open his mouth, and testify about Jesus. Peter, along with the others, were moved out of their comfort zone by the Holy Spirit to be part of God’s world in a whole new way.

What could cause someone to do that? On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came. And on that day, Peter, and all those with him, received power. Peter was never the same. The one who had denied Christ began to publicly preach Christ to any and all who would listen.  
-Adapted from online commentary by Debra J. Mumford

**Questions to Ponder for Accountability in the Group:**

1. By Pentecost morning, the 120 followers of Jesus had been in the Upper Room praying together for the 10 days following Jesus’ ascension. Why do you think prayer was such an important preparation for Pentecost?
2. Filled with the Holy Spirit, the disciples were moved from where they had been sitting and ventured out into the streets of Jerusalem. Do you think the Holy Spirit is still moving people today? If so, how can we be more open to the Spirit’s power?
3. Pentecost began a process of the Holy Spirit leading the followers of Jesus out of their personal, ethnic and even geographical comfort zones. What would have happened had they resisted? What do you think might happen if we resist today?
4. Brainstorm with your group how we might follow the lead of Acts 2 (and the Little Mermaid) beyond the status quo, seeking to live more fully into the new world that God envisions.

**Activity for the Life of a Disciple:**

* 1. Remember to find encouragement for the day by reading the daily devotional from FUMCC.
  2. Ponder and pray on this scripture this week: *When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.   
     Acts 2:1,2*